



PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT
AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Mayer et al.

Serial No.: 10/820,974

Filed: October 7, 2002

For: METHOD FOR
CONTROLLING ELECTRONIC
PARCEL COMPARTMENT
SYSTEMS

Group Art Unit: To be assigned

Examiner: To be assigned

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.


Sir:

Enclosed is an English language translation of the international preliminary examination report for PCT/DE02/03758.

Respectfully submitted,

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May 5, 2004

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Translation

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT/DE2002/003758



PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference ACDPA5146PWO	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/DE2002/003758	International filing date (day/month/year) 07 October 2002 (07.10.2002)	Priority date (day/month/year) 09 October 2001 (09.10.2001)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC G06F17/60		
Applicant DEUTSCHE POST AG		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.

☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 5 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 24 March 2003 (24.03.2003)	Date of completion of this report 30 October 2003 (30.10.2003)
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/EP	Authorized officer
Facsimile No.	Telephone No.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/DE2002/003758

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

- ☐ the international application as originally filed
- ☒ the description:
 pages _____ 2-6 _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____ 1, 1a _____, filed with the letter of _____ 30 September 2003 (30.09.2003)
- ☒ the claims:
 pages _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, as amended (together with any statement under Article 19
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____ 1-12 _____, filed with the letter of _____ 30 September 2003 (30.09.2003)
- ☐ the drawings:
 pages _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____
- ☐ the sequence listing part of the description:
 pages _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
 These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language _____ which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages _____
- ☐ the claims, Nos. _____
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/fig _____

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rule 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report

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V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims	1-12	YES
	Claims		NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	1-12	YES
	Claims		NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	1-12	YES
	Claims		NO

2. Citations and explanations

The application pertains to the technical field of electronic parcel compartment systems.

The closest prior art is document WO-A-0163494 (D1), acknowledged in the description to the present application. Said document discloses a computer-controlled system and method for delivering goods which comprises lockable units for transmitting said goods and which takes into account personalised delivery and consignment wishes. All the relevant parameters (customer wishes, drop-off location, times, etc.) are managed by an electronic data processing system, with data being transferred in both directions between the locker system and the server. The system makes use of both already existing customer profiles stored in the system and new data that is to be entered by the current customer.

The present application differs from D1 in that the control data is transmitted between the parcel compartment system (which corresponds to the locker system) and the server at exactly the moment that the data stock on the server has changed to a specified extent, which enables a comprehensive transmission of control commands to be achieved whilst at the same time reducing the data traffic

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required.

D1 does not disclose a solution to the problem of interest, either alone or in combination with any other prior art document. The concept of transmitting control commands as a function of the alteration of the data record at the server does not appear to have been used hitherto in the field of electric parcel compartment systems.

With respect to the amended claims 1-12, it is noted that they meet the requirements of PCT Article 41 since their content is supported by the description.

**Method for controlling electronic parcel compartment systems
and an interface for carrying out said method**

New description pages:

The invention relates to a method for controlling electronic parcel package compartment systems.

International patent application WO 01/63494 A2 discloses a computer-controlled system for delivering goods in which one or more locker systems are connected to a server that administers and provides the processes and data for the ordering of goods, their delivery and the operation of the locker system.

The invention is based on the objective of improving a method of the generic type in such a way that a flexible and simple adaptation of the electronic parcel compartment system is made possible. In particular, the method is supposed to allow a quick and reliable change of the operating parameters of the parcel compartment system.

According to the invention, this objective is achieved in that a method for controlling electronic parcel compartment systems is carried out in such a way that a checking procedure is carried out in the area of the server to see whether changes have been made to the data stored in the server and in that control commands are transmitted via an interface to the parcel compartment system as soon as a predefinable number of changes have been made to the data stock.

The invention entails a centralization and harmonization of the control commands for the parcel compartment systems.

The interface provided for this centralization allows a virtually real-time transmission of the control commands to the parcel compartment systems.

Patent claims:

1. A method for controlling electronic parcel package compartment systems,
characterized in that
a checking procedure is carried out in the area of the server to see whether changes have been made to the data stored in the server and in that control commands are transmitted via an interface to the parcel compartment system as soon as a predefinable number of changes have been made to the data stock.
2. The method according to Claim 1,
characterized in that
the control commands change operating parameters of the electronic parcel compartment system.
3. The method according to one or both of Claims 1 or 2,
characterized in that
the control commands act upon an electronic control unit located in the area of the electronic parcel compartment system in such a way that the selection of the available operating functions is changed.
4. The method according to Claim 3,
characterized in that
the change of the operating functions comprises a change in the possibility to open parcel compartments.
5. The method according to one or more of the preceding claims,
characterized in that
the control commands for controlling the parcel compartment systems change properties of the graphic user interface.

6. The method according to Claim 5,
characterized in that
a selection option of menu items of the graphic user interface is changed by the control commands.
7. The method according to one or more of the preceding claims,
characterized in that
the control commands are transmitted in accordance with an XML protocol.
8. The method according to one or more of the preceding claims,
characterized in that
the electronic parcel compartment systems send to the interface a request for the transmission of the control commands.
9. The method according to Claim 8,
characterized in that
the request to transmit the control commands is repeated when an event occurs.
10. The method according to one or both of Claims 8 or 9,
characterized in that
the request is repeated after a predefinable time interval.
11. The method according to one or more of the preceding claims,
characterized in that
the parcel compartment systems send data to the server.
12. The method according to Claim 13,
characterized in that
the server converts the transmitted data into control commands for controlling the parcel compartment systems.